A supplycacion

to our moste soueraigne lorde Kynge Henry the eyght/ Kynge of England of Fraunce and of Irelande/ & moste ernest defender of Christes gospell/ supreme heade vnder God here in erthe/ next & immedyatly of his churches of Englande and Irelande.

Cypres
862.

Matthei. ix.

The harweste is greate but the laborers are fewe. Wherfore praye the lorde of the harweste to sende forthe laborers into his harweste.

BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA

A supplication to our moste

souereaigne Lorde Kynge Henry the eyght Kynge of England / of Fraunce / and of Irelande. &c.

Most dreade Soueraigne lorde & moste christen Prynce / whē I remembre the lamentable. & wonderfull great blyndnes wherin the most parte of all Englāde not onely of ꝑ laye te called the temporaltie / but also of the Clergie / haue pytuously erred and wandered many hundreth yeres / acceptinge / reputynge & most vngodly / erroneously / and blyndely / estemynge the Bysshop of Rome to be supreame head ouer & aboue all christen congregatiōs: and in dyuerse other poyntes suche as be touchynge ꝑ neessarye articles of our faithe. I coulde not but meruell how and by what meanes suche pestilent errours and horrible darke blyndenes coulde or myght entre / Inuade & ouerflowe this youre realme / & to contynewe so longe in the same / not espied / perceyued / nor repelled. Considerynge that by all that tyme and space this youre Realme (as the most parte of men dyd then iudge

and esteame) was well endowed / replenyshed / and furnyshed wt many profounde lerned clerkes / wherof some were Bysshops Archedeacõs / Deanes / Prebendaries / Parsons / Doctours / Bachelars in deuinite / & other profounde lerned clerkes in bothe ye vniuersytees which were / graue / sage / & auncyent fathers. Contemplatinge and reuoluinge these thinges in my mynde: not a lytle moued / troubled / and vexed with ye same / I applyed me wt all my powre & dylygence exquysytely to serche & to knowe the originall grounde & cause therof. And in cõclusyon amõgest other thinges it chaunced me to reade in the. v. chapiter of Ezay a proposition that muche lamenteth ye captyuite and bondage which cõmeth & groweth to all people for lacke of knowleage in godds worde / Sayeng / Therfore cõmeth my flocke also into captyuite / because they haue not vnderstandinge / their glory is fampyshed wt hunger / & their pryde mared wt thyrste. Therfore gapeth hell and openeth her mouthe meruelously wyde. By this text gracyouse lorde it appeareth that all myserable blyndenes captyuite & bondage vnder synne / cõmeth for lacke of knowleage in Gods worde. I had forgotten at that tyme / that Christ reproued the

Mar. xij.

Phara-

Phariſees/ſayeng/Ye erre not knowinge the ſcriptures. Which reproue and rebuke ſhulde haue ben a ſuffycient admonycō and doctryne to me and to all other wherby we myght haue knowen that all errour commeth for lacke of vnderſtandinge & knowleage in the ſcriptures. But by what reaſon then coulde there be ſuche errour and blyndenes for lacke of knowleage in Gods worde in this your realme moſt graciouſe lorde/ſeing there were ſuche profounde clerkes & auncyent fathers/ Byſhops and ſtudentes in the ſame/which dyd teache & preache vnto the people cōtynually. The Apoſtle Paul in the. vi. chapiter to Timothe deſcribeth two kyndes of doctrynes/the one he calleth a godly doctryne & a doctryne of heith/the other he calleth a proude doctrine full of vnprofitable queſtions / ſtryuynge more for wordes than for godly knowleage/wherof ſpryngeth envy/ ſtryfe/raylings/cuyll ſurmyſynges/ & vayne dyſputacions of mē with corrupte myndes deſtytute of the trueth/which thinke that lucre is godlynes. This kynde of ſtryuynge and ſubtle dyſputacyons vnto this daye we call ſcole matters/from the which Paul commaundeth all chriſtyans to ſeparate thē ſelues. Soche clerkes ſayeth Paul/ ij. Ti. iij

be euer lernynge/but neuer atteyne to the knowleage of the trueth. Which suche wayne vngodly and vnprofitable lerninge/this pour realme most redoubted soueraigne was ouer moche replenysshed through the preachinge and teachinge of suche scolemen & subtyll disputers/ otherwise called decepuers. Which was one of the causes of our myserable blyndnes/ and of dyuerse errours and abuses spronge vp and crept in to this pour graces realme. For certeynely if ỳ clerkes of this poun graces realme/had bene endowed ỳ true knowleage of Gods worde/ and had also syncerely preached the same/ although suche errours and blyndnes had entered into this realme/yet they shulde neuer haue so longe contynewed in the same/but we shulde haue bene delyuered through the worde clerely from them.

Jo. viij. As Christe saieth. If you continewe in my wordes/ then are you my very disciples/ & shall knowe the trueth/ & the trueth shall delyuer yow/ and make you free. Therfore most dread soueraigne lorde/ seinge ỳ all errours/ spyrytuall blyndnes/ myserable captyuite/ and seruyle bondage vnto synne commeth for lacke of knowleage and syncere vnderstādinge in the holy scriptures/ and of ỳ cōtrarye parte/ through ỳ know

leage

leage & sincere vnderstandinge of the ho-
ly scriptures we knowe god our father and
his sonne Jhesus Christ our lorde / which Joa. v.
is eternall life/we be also become free frō
all condempnation of synne. And through Jo. xvij.
the syncere and true knowleage of ꝑ worde
we be newly regenerate & become ꝑ chil-
derne of god/ the habitacle and dwellinge
place of the holy ghoste/ which moueth &
steareth vs euer to mortefye the flesshe/ &
all her synfull lusts and concupiscence/ to
abhor and resist vice. What is then so ne-
cessary good and profitable for the christian
people bothe spirituall and cruile wealthe/
as the worde wherby we receyue faithe/ &
by faithe the holy ghoste. What troubleth
all commen wealthes/but treason/murder
theefte/couetousnes/adulterye/extorcion/
whordome/dronkenes/ periurye/ & suche
other synne/as sayethe the holy ghoste. Iu- Prouer.
stice and rightuousnes maketh the people xiiij.
wealthy / but synne maketh ꝑ people most
myserable. And all these the faithfull
through ꝑ true and syncere understādinge
of gods worde/ doo euer studye and labour
to ouercome / and vtterly to abholyshe by
faythe. As Paul sayeth. They which be Gal. v.
Christes/doo crucifye the flesshe with her
lustes and concupiscence. All good workes

A iiij and

and counceyles encreased and stablyshed through faythe. There is no study/ striffe/ nor laboure agaynst synne but through faithe. All conscyences that be quyet from synnes/onely through faythe be made quy
Rom.v et. As Paul sayeth/ Because we are iustyfyed by faithe/we are at peace with god through our lorde Jhesus Christ. What counforte hathe any Christian man in aduersytyes/temptacions/ desperation / but onely by fayth in Gods worde. The Christyan man hathe noo refuge nor helpe to resyst synne/but onely by gods worde/ as
Mat. our sauiour christ dyd/wherin he must fyxe
.iiij. a sure and constāt faythe. Faythe causeth vs and all ours/to be acceptable in ẏ syght
Roma. of God. For a conclusiō/whatsoeuer is not
xiiij. of fayth that same is synne. And vowte a constante and sure fayth/it is impossyble to
Heb.xi. please God. All men maye well perceyue/ that by the lawes and by the iuste execution of them/although synne may be for a tyme cohybyted and restrayned /yet it can not be suppressed and abholyshed/but onely through fayth. For there was neuer more godly lawes made for the punyshmente of synne/nor neuer more iuste and godly executyon of lawes admynistred/and yet there was neuer more synne raygnynge. For

cyuyle

ryuyle lawes made by man / can not be of
greater efficacye or strength / nor worke
greater perfection vertue and good will
in man / than the lawe of god: but the lawe
of God not onely worketh no obedyence
or vertue / but rather through occasyō take
of the infirmyte of the flesshe / steareth vp
synne / as sayethe Paul. I knowe not what Ro. vij.
lust dyd meane / except the lawe had sayed
thow shalte not lust. But synne toke an
occasyon by the meanes of the commande-
mente / and wrought in me all maner of cō
cupiscence / for verely woute the lawe / syn-
ne was dead. Ones sayth Paul / lyued wi-
out lawe. But when the cōmandement ca-
me / synne reuyued / and I was dead / and y
very same commaundement which was or
deyned vnto lyfe / was founde to be vnto Ro. vij.
me an occasyon of deathe. But nowe gra
ciouse lorde / for almoche as it appeareth / y
the lawe of God was not geuen to take a-
waye synne / but rather to declare and to
punysshe synne: moche lesse any lawe ma-
de by man / can auoyde and put awaye syn-
ne. But faythe is the true Instrument ap-
poynted by God / wherby synne is ouerco-
me & exiled. As the scripture sayeth / that Act. xv
God through faithe / doethe purysye & ma-
ke cleane all hartes. Also Christ sayethe / Jo. xv.

nowe are yow cleane / by the meanes of the wordes / whiche I haue spoken vnto you. This faythe shall cause/noryshe and breade/true obeydyence/and all other vertues in your graces subiectes hartes / wherby they shall be enforced to laboure not onely to obserue & kepe Godes lawes/ but also all your graces ordynances commaundementes and lawes/ without grudge or murmuracyon. This faythe as the Apostle sayeth commethe by hearinge of Gods worde preached / wherof Byshops Parsons/Vicars/& suche other called to haue spirituall cure/ be or shulde be dylygent mynisters/to whose vocatyō iustely parteyneth to declare and publyshe Gods worde syncerely & truely/ to all the people cōmytted to their spirituall charge. Most myghty Prynce wherfor if the Pastours appoynted to preache & teache Gods worde / win this your graces realme/doo not dyligētly instructe & teache the people cōmytted to their spirituall charge w the sayd worde/ accordinge as they be cōmaunded in ẏ scriptures. Act.xx. i.Pet.v. and Malache.xx. all kynde of synne shall increase and abounde / & the people vtterly be devyded. As sayethe the holy ghoste. When ẏ worde of God is not preached ẏ people perysheth.

Rom.x.

Act.xx.
i.Pe.v.
Mal.ii.
Proue.
xxix.

Also

Also the Wyse mā sayethe. All men be vayne in whom there is not the knowleage of god. Wherfore without any doubt ꝑ wāte and lacke of preaching of godes worde sincerely and truely hathe bene the very originall grounde and cause of all the insurrection / cōmotiō / dyscention / which hathe risen or begone within this youre graces realme or any parte therof. For through the want of preachyng of Godes worde synce ye haue entered in all poppishe blyndenes / vayne ꝯ dead ceremonyes / mēnes tradycyons be crept into the consciences of ꝑ symple innocentes in the steade of the lawe of God. Yea ydolatrye and all hypocrysye ꝯ detestable superstycyon for lacke of ꝑ light of Godes worde / is become Gods seruice. And yet notwithstandinge this wante ꝯ lacke of knowleage in Godes worde ꝯ the cupill which cōmethe manyfestly therof / (the more it is to be lamented /) there be many popishe monckes which late were Abbottes (to whom not onely vnworthely / but also vniustely / were geven greate pensyons) and many of their covent monckes hauinge nother lernynge nor other godly qualytyes (apte meate or convenyent to be in spirituall pastours) be nowe admytted to haue cure of soules. And

some

some suche which ded neuer knowe what is a soule/nor yet be able to haue cure ouer one soule/ be nowe admytted to haue charge ouer an hundreth and many moo / to the increase of all ygnorãcye and all popishe blyndnes/the hyghe waye & meanes to let in all kynde of synne / to the vtter dampnacion of all the soules committed to their spirituall charge. Alas doo nother ye patrones of suche benefyces/nor yet the incumbentes põder or regarde Gods thre-
Ezech. xxxiiij. atenynges by his Prophete Ezechiell sayeng/ As truely as I lyue sayeth the lorde for asmuche as my shepe are robbed and deuowred of the wilde beastes of the felde haupnge noo shepeherde / and seing that my shepherdes take nos regarde of my shepe/but feade them selues onely/and not my shepe. Therfore here the worde of the lorde o ye shepherdes / thus sayeth the lorde God. Beholde I my selfe will vpon the shepherdes / and requyre my shepe from their handes / and make them cease from feadinge of my shepe. Yea the shepherdes shall feade them selues nomore / for I will delyuer my shepe owte of their mowthes/ so that they shall not deuoure them after this. If this threatenynge be not sufficient warnynge & monycion to suche blynde shep-

de shepherdes/yet at the lest let them fea-
re Goddes curse pronownced in the same
chapiter agaynst suche neglygent and ing-
norāt shepherdes/sayenge. Woo be to the
shepherdes of Israell that feade them sel-
ues / shulde not the shepherdes feade the
flocke/yow haue eaten vp the fatt / yow
haue clothed yow with the wolle/ the best
fedd haue youe slayne/ but the flocke haue
yow not noryshed / heauen and erthe shall
muche rather perishe / than these wordes
wherwith God threatened suche pastours
shalbe found vntrue/That is/I will requy-
re my flocke of the handes of the shepher-
de. Suerly most myghty prynce it is to
busye an office/ tomuche and laborouse for
one spirituall shepherde (althoughe he
were very expert and connynge) to guyde
ordre/and kepe/ two or thre flockes of she-
pe/specially beyng so farre dystāt one from
an other/ that the sayd shepherde can not
be dayly present with them / to se the go-
vernaunce of them/ whose nature is dayly
to falle into dyuerse offences and spirituall
dyseases. For the office of a good shepherd
is not onely to feade his shepe in good pa-
sture/but also to seke the lost shepe / to call
agayne the strayed shepe in to the ryght
waye/ to salue and to make hole ꝑ broken
which

which is broken by aduersyte / the weake and sycke shepe in the faythe / with the counfortable promyses of God/declared in the gospell/to make strenge & constant: and in cõclusyon to aduenture his life (if nede requyre)for the defence of his shepe / ever circũspecte lyeng in wayte/to resyst the ra
1.Pe.v. ringe lyon/ whiche neuer sleepeth / goinge aboute and seakynge whome he maye devoure. Suche I saye shulde be their diligence and dayly cure over their flocke shewed/that not onely their shepe / but also all other/seing and perceyvinge their greate paynes and labours sustayned and take for the helpe and counforte of their shepe/ the gentle entertaynynge wt all pacyence/ humylyte & meakenes/ the fatherly love/ cure/and affection which the said bysshops and other Pastours shulde daylye shewe/ exercyse & practyse towardes Christes flocke cõmytted to their spirituall charge shall iudge them not onely good shepherdes which enter in by the dore/but also shall receyue & take thẽ to be most gẽtle/proudẽt kynde/& lovinge spirituall fathers. But most prudẽt gouernoure how shall this fatherly cure/love/zeale/ & affection/be shewed by the pastoure to his spirituall shepe
1.Pe. which dayly cowcheth and wayteth in

your

your graces houſeholde and courte/and in other noble & worſhipfull mēnes howſes/attendinge to pleaſe mē whych is called onely to ſerue God. And not wſtandinge his callinge to be a ſhepherde to feade Chriſtes flocke/ yet he will ſcaſe ſe and viſyte them onces in the yere. And when he viſyteth his ſhepe/ what ghoſtely councell he geveth them/ God knoweth. But for the more parte/he loketh more to his owne profett than to their wealthe. Alas the ambicyouſe appetyte & burnynge covetuouſe deſyre of the yerely cōmodyties/profettes and advauntages of the beneſyces/ hathe vtterly extynguyſhed and ſupped vp the ſpirituall love/zeale and affection which ought to be in the ſpirituall ſhepherdes. So that nowe it is ſtraunge and wonderfull to ſe or knowe one iuſtely to execute his office. Is this the honowre of any Kynge or of any other gouernowre/ that vnder the cloke and coloure of hys ſeruice/ a Biſhope or Prieſte called to feade the flocke of Chriſte/ ſhall leaue the ſame vntaught/ and ſo tranſgreſſe the commaundement of Chriſte for the pleaſure of men? Haue not Kynges and other rulers ſufficyent to endowe their chapelaynes/ wout retaynynge ſuche which

haue

haue receyued lyuinge and stypende to be
in their churches feadinge Christes flocke.
This is to moche dishonoure to the higher
powers/ agaynste goddes commaundemēt
& word to retayne an other mans seruasit.
But certenly although your highnes or
other rulers wolde nother call nor retayne
suche ambycious blynde guydes and cou-
tous pastours/ yet they their selfe will by
their frendes make importunate sute and
laboure to be in seruice with youre mage-
stye and with other rulers. The cause is
thys/(one inconuenyence graunted/many
folowe. There is alawe made in this youre
Anno. xxi. Hē viii. noble realme/that all spirituall parsons of
youre counsell maye haue thre benefyces
with cure. And all the chaplaynes of the
kynge/quene/prynce/ prynces or of any of
the kyngs children/ brethren / sisters/ vn-
cles and auntes/ maye haue lycence to ha-
ue two benefyces with cure. Euery Duke/
marques/erle / vycounte / archebyshope/
byshope / with dyuers other estates al-
well men as women maye haue two chap-
laynes which maye haue two benefyces &
cure/ And also dyuerse other degrees of scō-
le maye haue euery one two benefyces &
cure/so that ouer one of his cures although
he he take the profyttes yet from that
he muste

he muste neades be no reſydent and perad-
uenture to bothe he wilbe no feader nor
teacher. And alſo in the ſame eſtature all at
tendaunce in the courte and all other atte-
daunces vpon ſuche noble and worſhipfull
men which be lycenced to haue chaplaynes
maye be not reſydent, yea pylgrymes in ꝑ
tyme of goynge and cõmynge from their
pylgrymage be by that eſtature dyſpenced
to be non reſydent. O lorde where was ꝑ
light of thy worde/which ſhulde haue bene
written in the hartes of the makers of ꝑ
eſtature. If there had ben godly ſhepher-
des which had dyligently executyd their
office and callynge / we had neuer wande-
red ſo blyndely to agree or conſent to the
makynge of any ſuche eſtatute. Doo we
which thinke vs Chriſten men eſteame ſpi
rituall benefyces to be nothinge els but ly-
uinges to be geuen at owre pleaſure to pry
ſtes for ſeruyce done? Is not the benefyce
geuen in reſpecte of a ſpirituall offyce to be
executyd & done? Doth not God cõmaun-
de ſtreaytely ſhepherdes to feade their flock
ke dyligently? Can man or any lawe made
by man dyſpence with Gods commaunde-
ment? O lorde in thy handes be the hartes
of all kynges and other rulers/enlyghten
theyr hartes lorde with the light of thy

worde that they maye knowe and see this
pestylent yll blyndenes/which so longe ha-
the caused thy shepe to wander in darcke-
nes. And when they perceyue it they ma-
ye haue grace and tyme to reforme the sa-
me to thy glory and the helpe of this real-
me. And I shall euer desyer of God and
wishe in my harte to all suche as be called
to be attendaunte nere youre magestie and
all other gouernowres / that for any car-
nall loue/fauoure/or affection whiche they
beare to any man for kyndred/frendshype/
luker/or otherwise/they doo not make any
suche vngodly suytes petycions or reque-
stes to your highnes or to any other gouer
nowre for any parson to be admytted to a-
ny office other spirituall or temporall/who
me they doo not certeynly knowe by moste
certeyne and sure proues and witnesses/to
be apte/meate/and conuenyent aswell in
lernynge as in condycions/to exercise vse
and to occupye suche office and rome/
wherunto he by suche their sute made/shul
de be called/ appoynted and admytted(not
onely for the shame rebuke and troble whi
che vpon dewe examynacion had and foun
de contrary to their vntrewe sute)myght
come and growe to them/but also for the
cuyll incommodyte and pestilent myschef
which

which shall ensewe to all suche which shalbe committed to his or their gouernaunce & charge. Alas that euer amongest the christen flocke shulde be knowen or sene that suche office which in Christes churche shulde be the most godly / most necessary / most spirituall and most profytable bothe to the bodye and sowle / nowe is become a worldely honowre / a lordely dygnyte / a riche carnall prowde hauinge estate and countenance / and the possessor therof hauinge one ly the name of a spirituall minyster / but no vertue nor godly qualyte which of right ought to be in euery suche minister. If this be well pondered and remembred most mercyfull gouernowre / it is most to be lamented. But seynge this blyndnes hathe so lōge cōtynewed & somoch euill hathe ensewed & folowed therof in the defaulte of godly postours / it is not onely nedefull aboue all thinges to be circūspect in chosynge ernestly tryed / experte / and well lerned ministers to preache Gods worde syncerely / but also to compell the same to be demurante abydinge and respdent vpon their cures. And all suche whiche be crepte ints benefices for luker & aduauntage vpō vntrewe suggestion and false fayned surcs made / which can not or doo not feade their

flocke/to depryue thē of suche benefyces be cause they other can not or doo not execute the office to that belonginge. Euery no wyse man lyghteth a cādell and putteth hym vnder a buschell. And if he set vp a cādell (which other for lacke of talowe or for o-ther cause can not geue light) shortely he taketh hym downe and putethe an other which can geue good light in his place. So all godly wyse men will order all spirituall lightes which in dede can not geue godly lighte for lacke of spirituall grace which shalde be in them. For Bysshops and other Pastors which be chosyne & instituted cō trary to the ordynaunce appoynted & pre-scribed by Gods worde/ which other doo not or can not execute the office pertaynin ge to his or their callynge/ be not godly & trewe Bysshops but rather Images & Idol les hauinge and bearinge onely the name and outwarde apparance of a Bysshoppe or Pastor. But as concernynge the lernyn ge vertue & other godly qualyties whiche parteyne & be of greate necessyte and in-styce requysite to be in euery godly pastor/ they haue nothinge lesse. For if Christ (which sayed to Peter from henceforthe I make the a fysher to catche men) doo not endowe ỳ office wyth lernynge/ grace/

power

power & good will to preache his worde
before Patrons presente hym to any suche
spirituall office / the electe and admytted
notwithstandinge the admyssion and Pa- Joan.x
trons presentment / shall contynually abyde
and remayne an hypocrite / and suche one
which dothe not enter in by the dore / but Math.
presumeth to enter withowte a weddyn- xxij.
ge garment / whom Christ condempneth
to owtwarde darckenes / and also calleth
hym a thef / whose rewarde withowte
doubt / shalbe at the daye of the laste iudge
ment with theves / if he repent not and rea
lygne vp hys offyce which he can not ex-
ecute fulfyll and performe. Wherfore I
instruste not but that all suche which ha-
ue power to present and to admytte theyr
clerkes to spirituall offyces readynge this
lytle boke for the dyscharge of theyr con-
scyence and for the glory of God / the com-
modyte and vtylite of the cōmon wealthe
(which will ensewe the godly presentacyon
and admyssion of well lerned / approued &
godly clerckes to spirituall offyces) will
from thencefortho applye and conforme
them to the forme and maner of electyon
of spirituall mynisters appoynted prescry
bed and symytted by Godes worde / which
is this. That euery man chosyn to vse any

ſpyrituall office/ ſhulde be fyrſte well proued aſwell for theyr lernynge as alſo for theyr other vertuouſe condycions. Fyrſt for theyr lernynge wherwith they muſte not onely be able to enſtructe and teache the people committed to theyr ſpyrytuall charge/ but alſo able to reproue other which reſyſt the ſame doctrine/with many other godly qualyties. As it apperethe in the fyrſte Epiſtle of Paul to Tymothe and alſo to Tyte. Nowe moſte mygthy defender of the Chriſtyan religyon/ſeinge that Godds worde hathe preſcrybed and declared that euery man which ſhalbe called and appoynted to be a ſpyrituall mynyſter muſte fyrſte be proued and knowen howe godly and ſpiryttually he hathe enſtructe and teached the people / what lernynge he hathe in the ſcriptures/and not in the lawes / to reproue errours and to condempne hereſyes. What paynes he hathe taken in preachynge Godds worde/ and alſo whether he hathe geuen good example of lyuinge accordinge to his doctryne. In this maner euery chriſtian ought to proue his clerke before he other preſente or admytt hym. But nowe alſo moſte benygne lorde/cōſydre of the cōtrary parte & remembre for what cauſes the kynges

1 Tim. iij
Tyt. i.

pour

pour noble progenitors in tymes paste ha
ue chosen Bysshopps / & other patrons ha
ue presented theyr clerckes to personagyes
& Vicaragyes to haue cure of sowles. These
bothe causes well consydered no man wyll
greately meruell that we haue wandered
so longe in blyndenes. For in tymes paste
Kynges haue geuen theyr Bysshoprycks
to theyr Councellers / chaplaynes whiche
haue bene dayly attendauntes in ꝑ court
e / which also haue done to them good
seruice / as embasadoures / or to suche which
haue taken paynes in theyr householde / as
aumners & deanes of ꝑ chappell / clercks of
theyr closett & suche other officers / where
gods worde dothe not approue any bysshop
ricke to be geuē to any mā for any suche ser
uice done / or for any suche paynes takē / but
onely for ꝑ gifte whiche he hathe frō God
to preache his worde / & for ꝑ paynes & la-
boures sustayned in preachinge of the sayd
worde. And as Kynges in tymes paste haue
abused their giftes of bysshoprikes / so noble
men & worshipfull mē aswell of ꝑ clergie as
of ꝑ layete haue abused their presentaciōs
to their prebēdes personages & vicarages /
geuing thē to their chaplaynes / or to other
for lwndred in blonde or for alpaunce / or els
to suche as haue ben surueyours of thier

landes/receyuoures of their rentes / stuar-
des of their houshold/faconers/gardyners
or to suche other whom they fauoure for su-
che worldely seruice & qualyties. To suche
they geue their benefyces as rewardes or
wagies to hyrelynges for suche seruice do-
ne/or to be done/ hauinge lytle or noo re-
garde to the great charge and spirituall cu
re which by Goddes worde belongeth to
all suche spirituall offices. For kynges and
rulers in tymes paste had noo lesse know-
leage of any thynge/then of Godes worde
which the subtyll bysshops & crafty pystes
were euer studiouse and desyrouse to kepe
secrete from the hygher powers. For so lō
ge as Godes worde was kepte secrete and
hydē from gouernours/ so longe ỹ clergye
dyd leade not onely the kynges/but also all
gouernowres & the cōmons whyther they
wolde. Thys was the crafty polycye of the
clergye/to kepe ỹ knowleage of Gods wor
de from all men/ that they myght vnlaw-
fully and vnworthely be promoted to spiri-
tuall cures/and vse the profettes of them
vngodly/ and that they myght also contyn-
nually exercyse their lustes and iniquyties.
The.h. As Paul sayth They be agaynste all men
forbyddinge vs to speake to the people
wherby they myght be saued / that they
myght

myght fulfyll their iniquyte and synne con
tynually. Haue not some of the byshops w
their retynewe at this daye practysed their
olde polycy to extingnyshe ẏ light through
all Englande/that they myght ones agay
ne leade vs quyetly in darckenes. Is not
there a lawe made through their crafte ⁊
subtylte which geueth power to certayne
cōmyssioners wherof the byshoppes cha-
unceler or cōmyssarye shalbe named to be
two of the cōmyssioners/which shall haue
full power to take into their custodye all su-
che bokes wherin is conteyned any clause
or artycle repugnaunte to any of the syx ar
tycles/ and ẏ same bokes to burne and dy
stroye as to the discretion of thre of them
shalbe thoughte expedyent. Marke well
what they purpose by this estatute. Are
there any bokes which write agaynste the
popes prymacie/but they also write agayn-
ste some of the syx artycles? Their coloure
is to take awaye all bookes which wryte
agaynste the syx artycles/but their very in
tēte purpose and meanyng is to take awa-
ye all bookes whiche conteyne any godly
lernynge that write agaynste ẏ byshop of
Romes prymacy. Howe cruelly doo the by-
shops punyshe all thē which pretende to ha
ue lernynge and specially in Godds worde?

Suche they call heretyques and perſecute with putteynge them to open ſhame/ with enpryſonmẽte/ and in concluſyõ with deathe moſt fearefull and paynefull. All this they doo to diſcorage all men from the ſtudye of Gods worde/fearinge leaſte that by ſuche ſtudiouſe braynes which learne Gods worde and publyſhe the ſame their iniquyte ſhulde be made manyfeſt. What ſtudye and paynes they take to kepe ꝑ light from the people. But no man which knowethe ꝑ ſcriptures will meruell of this their policye and crueltye. For ſaynt Johan declarethe their practyſe playnely ſayenge. Ioã. iij. He that doeth euyll hateth the light/and why: becauſe his workes whyche be euill ſhulde not be reproued by the light. And for aſmuche as oure byſhops countenaũce of lyuinge/their greate poſſeſſyons/and lordely dompnyons in them agreeth wt Godds worde/as deathe with lyfe/ God with the deuill/ light with darckenes/therfore they hate ꝑ light which declarethe the ſame/ and ſtudye to ſuppreſſe the ſame by all craft and polycye. And ſeinge they can ſo craftely iuggle and haue ſuche frendſhipe and fauoure to conueye/ bringe to paſſe/ that all bookes ſhall come into their handes vndre the colours of the vj artycles/ it is to be feared that

ſhortely

shortely they will by lyke crafte subtyl-
te and frendshype procure the Bible in
Englyshe to be taken from the lapete /
& then we shalbe ledd in darcknes by our
Byshops and other blynde gydes and not
Pastoures at theyr pleasure and will / whi-
che is the effecte of all theyr study laboure
and purpose. Nowe most valeaunt defen-
der of Christ / it appeareth plainely how
we many myseryes we be wrapte in /
through the vngodly electyon of suche as
be admytted to haue spurytuall cure and
offyce to teache Godds worde / whiche
not onely haue lytle lernynge / but also they
be enemyes to all men whiche can and doo
preache Gods worde sycerely and trewly /
because they lyue contrarye to the same /
as I haue before declared. And this is
the originall grownde and cause of the a-
bundaunce and increase of darknes and of
synne / as also of the longe contynuaunce
of popishe blyndnes whiche hathe raigned
in this realme so longe. Wherfore yf the
byshops and other elected and appointed
to be shepherdes accordinge to theyr voca-
tyon and callinge / be not fyrste knowen
and well proued to haue suche knowleage &
godly doctrine / so that they can & also doo
instantely & dylygētly preache Gods worde

whiche

whiche is ꝑ light expellinge all darckenes of synne/ then muste nedes synne encreale & abounde without any restraynte or bridle.

Matt. vi. For if the light whiche is amongest yow be darckenes/howe muche shall the darkenes be? Youre grace and your cyuile power doo punnyshe synne / when it is done and cõmytted / accordinge to the iustyce of lawes/ as to your vocatyon & office of right belongethe to doo. But the office and dewtye of the Pastor is to preache Goddes worde/wherby he shall conuert the hart of the synner /whiche is willinge & disposed to doo synne / so that he shall not breake fourthe to doo synne in the acte/ which ꝑ cyuyle powre for the example of other by equyte and iustyce is bounde to punyshe. Therfore the dyligent executyon of the office of the pastoure shalbe the pryncipall meane and occasyon that lesse synne shalbe cõmytted / and so the higher powers shall haue lesse occasyon to execute the extreame iustyce of lawes / and consequently many mens lyues whiche nowe for lacke of the knowleage of Godes worde shuld be loste for cõmyttinge murder/felonye/and suche other offences/shall then be preserued that they shall not commyte suche offences/ which the hygher powers by the lawes of

equyte

equyte ⁊ iustyce be compelled to cōdempne and to punyshe with deathe. Wherfore ẏ godly tranquyllyte reste and peace of all this your realme soueraygne lorde/and the good order of the same hangeth and resteth moche vpon the godly and dyligent executyon of the office of pastors and of the spirituall shepherds dewly called and admytted accordinge to Godes worde. Therfore it behoueth the presenter of the clercke to a benefyce and cure of sowles to be cyrcumspect and well ware what clerke he doth present/ and that he haue good knowleage experience and proue of his clercke before he present hym. For if a pastour doo not feade the flocke of Christe cōmytted to his charge / the deathe of their sowles shalbe required of his handes. As the Prophete Ezechiell sayeth in the.xxxiij.chapi. Ezech. xxxiij.
And if the patron willingely/other for kyndred/fauoure/ frendshippe/ seruice or money/ present a clerke which he knoweth not to be so lerned in Gods worde/that he be able to instructe and teache the people cōmytted to his charge bothe w̄ the lawe of God and withe the gospell/every suche patron cōsenteth to the deathe ⁊ dāpnacion of the sowles cōmytted to the charge of suche vnlerned preste. And therfore suche a

patron

Patron shall also be punyshed with like
Rom.i. payne/whiche is eternall / as the Apostell
sayeth. Not onely they that doo euill / but
also they whiche consent therunto shalbe
punyshed with like payne. What wyse
man lusynge wolde hyer a shepherde to
gouerne hys beastly worldly shepe which
nother wolde nor coulde feade/handle/sal-
ue nor ones see his shepe cōmytted to his
charge. Suche a wyse shepherde wolde
shortely make his maysters profet come to
lytle aduauntage. Surely a wyse man wol-
de chose no suche shepherde. And if he
were decepued through the persuasyon of
some of his frendes / yet when he hathe
proued that he hathe no connynge nor dyli
gence/ he will shortely dyscharge hym of
his cure and seruice. Shall we be esteemed
christen men whiche haue more tēder loue
and affectyon to owre corruptyble profett/
than we haue to the honowre of God /
the eternall wealthe of ꝑ immortall sowles
of owre christen bretheren/ whom Gode
commaundeth to loue as owre selfe. Christ
Jo.xxi. ded not commytt to Peter the cure and
charge of his shepe before he asked thryse
of Peter whether he loued hym. As who
shulde saye. I wolde not commytt my best
beloued Je well and treasure vnto the /
vnlesse

vnlesse thowe loue me hartely. I wolde wysshe that all gouernowres and rulers in this case wolde take example and folowe Christ whiche knowynge ꝑ Good wyll of Peters harte/yet as one ingnoꝛãte therof ded demaunde this questiõ of Peter before he ded cõmytt ꝑ cure of his flocke to hym/ therby to geue example ⁊ cõmon doctryne to all his faythfull folowers ꝑ they shulde haue suche tender and feruent loue towardes the Christen soules / that they wolde not commytt the gouernaunce and cure of them to any man/but vnto suche of whom they haue proue ⁊ sure knowleage / that aswell by their preachinge ⁊ syncere teachinge of Gods worde/as also by their vertuouse lyuinge cõsonante to ꝑ same worde they had vnfaynedly a faythfull harty loue towardes Chrystes flocke. A blynde eye which can not dyrecte and leade the bodye is a blemyshe and a burden to the naturall bodye/ and noo commodyte. In lykewyse a man chosen to be a spyrytuall Pastour which hathe not the knowleage and grace to preache the lawe and the gospell / is but a blynde eye not able to dyrecte and leade the spyrytuall bodye. Wherfore if any patrõ chose any suche ingnoꝛãte mã to be a pastoure / a spirituall eye and light

to leade

to leade the spirituall sowles/ he not onely deceyueth them but also asmoche as lyeth in hym kyllethe the bodye/and dothe greate iniurye to Christes bloode. Now it may please yowre highnes to note and marke what myschef and incõuenyence folowe the electyon and admyssion of an ignorante postour. Fyrste if an ignorante bysshope in Gods worde be admytted/he cannot execute his office because he knoweth not the scryptures whiche teacheth hym what shulde pertayne to his owne office. And as the bysshop is ignorante in Godes worde/ so he admytteth suche as be vnlerned in Gods worde/ eyen suche as by noo possybylite can execute the office of their callinge. Idle parsons/ vnhappy/dronckerdes / swerers / common players at all vnthryfty games/in whom there is no chastyte/noo humylyte/iustyce/nor temperance. For a conclusion/suche they admytte in whom there is noo holynes/godly doctryne/nor good example of lyuinge. To suche they committe ỹ healthe of sowles / the flocke of Christe dearely bought with his bloode/by suche ydle and wicked harlottes the enheritaunce of Christe is troden vnder fote. All euyll condycions maners and doctrynes by them be tawght / so that in

the

the steade of holy scripture is crepte in the doctrine of lyes / all superstycions / dead & vayne ceremonyes / and lycence to doo all kynde of synne. Some of the blynde ignorante prestes teache the people that God is honowred / and soules releued of their paynes through the ryngynge of belles / paintinge of postes / and settynge vp tapers and candelles before the sayd postes / whō the blynde prestes doo bothe sence & spryncle with holy water. An other sorte of blynde shauelings teache the people to gett heuen with fastynge / this prescripte daye & that daye / with trentalles and masses of scala celi / with forbearinge of bodely workes & kepinge vdle holy dayes / they preache muche holynes and Gods seruice to stande in their holy oyle / holy creame / holy water / holy asshes / hallowed bedes / mumblynge of a numbre of psalmes in laten / keapinge of church ales in the whiche with leappynge / daunsynge / and kyssyng they mayntayne the profett of their churche (to the honoure of God as they both saye and thynke.) And thus the blynde leadeth the blynde / that both fall hedlonge into the lake of eternall brennynge fyer. What naturall harte is there whiche will not lamente the misery / yea the dampnaciō most certēly

threatened by Gods worde vnto all ignorante and negligent bysshopps and other spyrytuall shepherdes which doo not dylygently execute theyr office and vocation? What honest louinge harte doth not bewayle the habundaunce of synne / the longe myserable blyndnes wherin this realme hath ben ledd and wrapped in through the vnguorantye and negligence of suche blynde gupdes. But is there any chrysten harte which can forbere contynuall syghinge and mornynge / remembringe the multytude yea the infynyte numbre of sowles (whiche without the greate mercye of God passinge all his worckes) through ingnorantye & negligēce of suche blynde shepherdes / be vtterly cast awaye & dampned. What good cyuyle harte wolde not I saye lament and bewayle the greate burden wherwith this pour realme (gracyouse lorde) is ouercharged through the greate multytude of chauntery prestes / soule prestes / chanons / residensaryes in chathedrall churches / prebendaryes / muncke pencyons / moreowe mas prestes / vnlerned curattes / prestes of gyldes and of fraternytees or brotherhedes / rydinge Chaplaynes / and suche other vyle parsons / whyche yf they

they be well noted / and also what fruite
ſpryngethe of them indyfferētly valewed /
conſydered / and pondered / it will appe-
re manyfeſtly to all reaſonable and godly
wyttes / that they do brynge noo maner
commodyte profett or vtylyte other ſpyri-
tuall or temporall to this pour publycke
wealthe. No / no / they be not onely no
commodyte nor profett to the common
wealthe / but rather mochе hynderance.
And truly no lytle wasters / ſpoylers / and
robbers / and that of the moſt poore / in
dygēt and neadye of youre loutnge ſubiec-
tes / which be moſt craftely / ſubtelly / and
vnrighteouſely deprpued of ꝑ charytable
ſuccoure and almes of many ſymple vn-
lerned innocentes / through a vayne hope
and falſe confydence that theyr ſowles
ſhulde be releued and releaſed of theyr
paynes and tormentes dewe for theyr
ſynnes / when they be departed this
worlde / by the longe prayers of pre-
ſtes. And (the more it is to be lamen-
ted) noo lytle nombre of pour ſubiec-
tes through ſuche vngodly truſte and
confydence in maſſes and dyrpges to
be ſonge and celebrated for them when
they be dead / be greatly encoraged to
lyue both wickedly towardes God / and

also vnfrutefully towardes the worlde/lyt-
le remembrynge and eſtempynge their voca-
cion & callinge wherin God hath appoyn-
ted them to walke/and moche leſſe the ex-
treame neceſſyte of their chriſten brethe-
ren. This vayne hope in the lõge prayers
of preſtes (no doubt graciouſe lorde) is a
greate occaſyon of moche powerte amõgeſt
the poore and neady of this powr realme.
For the ſpedy remedy of this powerte a-
mongeſt powr louinge ſubiectes / and the
vtter ſuppreſſyon of ſuche vayne hope in ꝑ
prayers of preſtes to be made for powr ſub-
iectes when they be deade / whiche is the
greate cauſe of this myſerable powerte/it
may pleaſe powr mageſtye of powr accuſto
med goodnes to call to powr graciouſe re-
membrãce that all the people of this powr
regyon be ſubiect vnto powr gracyouſe
power/rule / and dominion as vnto their
ſupreme hedd and gouernowre dewly by
God appointed to gouerne them onely du-
rynge their naturall lyues / but when it
pleaſeth God to take their ſowles owt of
this myſerable worlde/than powr grace is
diſcharged of all gouernance/cure & char-
ge ouer thẽ / as of ſuche which after their
death doo not appertayne to powr grace/
nor be of powr Kyngedome/ but onely of ꝑ
Kynge-

Kyngedome of God/vnder his gouernāce prouisyon and rule. Into the whiche Kyngedome nother your grace nor noo other erthely prynce maye lawfully vsurpe or take any rule prouisyon care or gouernance/ for the sowles entered therunto. Seinge þ your grace haue no auctorytie nor power ouer the sowles departed/ yow be not onely dyscharged to gouerne to care or to prouyde for them beinge deade/ but moche rather to prouyde that they maye not be decepued so vnder the coloure of longe prayre/ but that they may be taught syncerely Goddes worde whyle they be lyuinge vnder your subiection so that they maye beleue constantly and lyue godly/ and then by Christes promesse hell gates shall not prevayle ageinste them/ moche lesse they shall haue any neade of suche straunge succoure and helpe of men/ nothinge appointed nor tawght by Goddes worde to be profitable or necessary for their sowles after their death. Wherfore I mistruste not but that your magestye when you shall next intreate for the reformacion of the enormytyes & abuses sprongen vp in the christen religiō/ yow will godly reforme suche abuse and dissembled couetuousenes/ and certennely beinge no godly remedy nor helpe for sow-

les departed which hathe noo strengthe nor effycacy of Gods worde/ which is the very trew fowndaciō of all the Christen religion and helpe for sowles. And in ꝑ meane season I doo no lesse thynke and also pray hartely to God that your magestye will prouide and make ordinaunce/ that all suche landes and possessyons whereupon so many ydle hypochrytes and deceyuers be greate burdeyn & charge to your realme/ which hytherto haue lyued vngodly and vnprofytablely/ maye from henceforthe be partly conuerted to the supportation and mayntenaunce of common scoles/ wherby errours crepte vp through ingnorāce maye be through knowlege represled/ and godly lernynge and knowleage more plēctuousely planted and admynistred/ and partely that your poore louing subiectes maye be more mercyfully releued & succoured/ whyle they lyue vnder your subiection charge and gouernaunce. This godly dystrybution (most prudent Soueraigne) of the landes and possessions ordeyned and appoynted for the counforte soccoure and helpe of yowr poore louinge and lyuinge subiectes/ is moche more consonante and agreable to Godds worde and more certeyne dyscharge of your graces cōscyence

they

then to suffer the same possessyons to be vngodly caste awaye and consumed vnder suche false colowre and pretence to releue sowles departed / of whom your mageslye haue nother cure nor charge / nor can not assure to them by Godds worde through suche longe prayers of prestes releesse of paynes after their deathe / or any other ayde counforte or succoure. For wythowt any doubt (gracyouse lorde) yf suche hyred prayers had ben godly and necessary for the sowles departed / other Christ or his Apostelles wolde haue taught it / or at the leaste haue praysed or practysed it / & not so manifestly reproued & threatened it / sayeng. Beware of them whiche deuoure wyddowes howses vnder coloure of longe prayers / theyr iudgment shalbe moche longer. In all the newe testament there is no mencyon made of any suche office nor office instytuted nor appoynted to praye for the deade. And yet all men I thynke will confesse that the truethe of Godes worde was most syncerely set forthe and preached in the tyme of Christe & of his Apostles / in whose tyme there was no suche craftye lernynge publyshed nor tawght by them / nor longe tyme after. But then men stablyshed and grownded

Marc. xij.

their religion and hope of healthe vpon Godds worde/whiche teacheth vs ẏ who so beleueth is saued and hathe no neade of longe prystishe prayers/ and who so beleueth not/shallbe cōdempned. Betwene these extreame contraries there is no meane/ as saint Augustyn saieth. Wherfore I exhorte all them(whiche contrary to all holy scriptures) truste to the thyrde place and there to haue release of paynes through ẏ longe prayers of prestes / that they wolde geue ouer suche fayned fantasye of mē(subtylly ymagined only through insaciable couetuousenes of ambiciouse prestes to gett mony(therwith to mainteyne their vngodly lustes/and to lyue ydlely and delycately) and to truste rather to the sure and infallyble trewthe of Godds worde/which wowt doubte is to repent and beleue/and vtterly to forsake all synne/and than constantly to trust to Goddes promesse of mercy. Here manifestly apperethe soueraygne lorde/ in what miserable blyndnes the most parte of this your realme haue lōge tyme be led/ yea and allmost drowened through the longe custome vsed theryn. Who is it that cā not lament (I saye) this deplorate ⁊ miserable sorte of blynde shepherdes. Be not they bowght with the same pryce wherw

Note here.s. August in his boke entyteled Hypognosticō. fol.ix.

we

we be bought to be membres of one bodye wherof Christ is heade. If we be membres of one bodye certenly we can not then but taste and feale not onely their euill/ but also the lamentable estate of al other caste awaye through them. Lorde I truste the punyshement is past wherwith thow haste threatened the worlde to be punished with hunger and thryste not with hungre and thryste of breade and drincke / but for lacke of hearinge thy worde. It is nowe tyme lorde to shewe thyne accustomed goodnes & mercye/ for the whiche we doo dayly and hartely praye/sayenge. Through the tender mercy of God wherwith he hathe vysyted vs / geue light to vs which sytt in darcknes and in the shadowe of deathe/to guyde our feate into the waye of peace. Also it is a daungerouse thinge to admitte one to be a spirituall pastoure whose professyon and study all his youthe hathe ben in decrees and popishe lawes. For suche a study for the moste parte ingēdereth a popishe harte. If any suche be admitted to be a pastoure / he shal not onely other secretly in confessyon or by some other craftye meanes/ poyson his flocke with mans tradycyōs & popishe doctrine/but also shall augmēt ꝑ popishe power/ for ꝑ abrogacion

Amos. viij.

Luce. i.

Muche more than expedient and sure prouf of Pastours (whose office is soo necessarie) shulde be hade and made before they be admytted to their spirituall office and charge. And although the election of the bysshop and of other spirituall pastors in euery poynte be hade and done according as I haue before wryttē, yet (most dread soueraigne lorde) I see two fowle deformytes and grete lamentable mysscheefes annexed to the vocacion & office of bysshops, which not reformed will poyson and vtterly corrupte the godly vocacion and electyon of the sayd bysshops. The one infection and pestylent poyson is there greate lordshipps and dompnions with the yerely prouentes of the same. Whiche hathe so fashyoned them in proude countenaunces and worldely behauoure, that nowe they be moste lyke to heathen Princes and moste vnlyke vnto Christe, although they wolde be esteamed of all men to be his trewe successours, yet poore Christ sayethe. The foxes haue hooles, the byrdes of the ayre haue neastes, but the sonne of man hathe not wherin to laye his head. But oure bysshops haue gorgeouse & sūptuouse buylded howses maners & castelles pleasauntely set abowte wt parckes well replenished with deare,

warrens

wherof powr grace and powr honorable
councell haue taken greate paynes & tra-
vayle. Nowe effsones I truste that all men
which reade this lytle boke shall percepue
therby what inconuenyence & dampnable
euyll ensewerh the vngodly presentacyon
and admyssyon of the vnlerned in Godds
worde/and carnall prestes to sspirituall
offices, And although suche Patrons
haue lytle zeale and loue to the common
and publike wealthe/yet for the synguler
and carnall loue which they beare to their
clerkes (whom they addycte and bynde
surely to eternall dampnacion/if they ge-
ue them suche sspirituall offyces/whiche
they neyther can nor will execute and per-
fourme) or for the tender zeale and loue
which they haue to the sowles so derely
bought with Christes bloode/they wyll
wyth all circumspection proue theyr cler-
kes that they be not onely well lerned in
Gods worde/but that they also haue ta-
ken greate paynes in preachynge the sa-
me/and that they haue also lyued accordin
ge to their preachynge. Suche experymēt
and proue was commaunded to be made
of weddowes/before they were admytted
to lyue vpon the charge of the congrega-
cyon. As it appearethe in Tymothy. i. Tl.v.

Muche

warrens swarminge full of conyes / and fyshe pooles well stored with dyuerse kyn des of fyshes. And not onely these com modities and pleasures / but also diuerse o ther pleasures. Howe this lordely and worl dely bysshoplike estate agreeth with Chri stes wordes / I thinke a man can not rea sonably conjecture or ymagen by theyr countenaunce and lyuinge / that they be Christes trewe disciples. The other mys chefe and euill is that they haue to many worldly cures and busenes. For to these maners and lordeshipes belonge many tenauntes / for whose leases to be made fy nes and harpottes to be appointed and ta ken / a mercyamentes to be assessed taxed & also forgeuen and dispenced / there be noo fewe sutes made to my lorde bysshope / also the hearinge of testamentorye causes / dy uorses / causes of matrimonye / of sclaun ders / of leacherye / adultery / and punyshe ment of bawdrye / and suche other bume courte matters (wherof not one belong to his office & vocation appointed by Godds worde. My lorde bysshope is so occupyed & vnquyeted / that he hathe noo leasure to stu dye nor to preache Gods worde. But suche affayres and worldly busynes nothing per teynynge to his vocation be very greate

hynde-

hynderance and lett to my lorde Bysshop
that he can not applye hym to exercyse
his owne offyce. For no man can serue two Mat.vi
maisters sayeth Christ. The Apostles
thought it not iuste and equall to prouide
for the necessary ipuinge of the poore/lea Act.vi.
uinge Godds worde vntawght. But my
lorde Bysshoppe doinge these thinges no-
thing pertepninge to his office/thinckeith
that he hathe exactely done his offyce.
From these greate maners commeth pe-
rely greate rentes pleasures & profettes/
which although they be the good crea-
tures of God/ yet thabundaunce of them
(beinge where they be more impedyment
than helpe) be a greate occasyon of corrup-
cion in the vser of them. And peraduentu-
re they wolde allure and intyse a Bysshops
harte to truste in thē and so corrupte hym/
as the scripture sayeth. ¶Blessed is the ry-
che which is founde without blemyshe &
hathe not gone after golde nor hoped in
money and treasures/where is there suche
a one and we shall commende hym and call
hym blessed / for greate things dothe he
amonge his people. And if my lorde Bys-
shoppe shulde geue the superfluyte of his
goodes to the poore (whose goodes iustely
they be) as the Prophete Ezay sayethe/ Esa.iij.

Than

Than my lorde shulde lacke thē to furny-
she his lordely countenaunce/ and so my
lorde shulde loose his lordely honoure and
prayse of the worlde Wherfore as these
superfluouse possessions be annexed to esta-
tes of Bysshops by mans vayne fantasye
and not by Gods worde / so my lorde
Byshoppe wyll other keape them to ma-
ke hym more fryndes/remembrynge that
ryches makethe many fryndes / but
the poore is forsaken of his neyghbowre/
or deuyse the exspence of them contrary
to Godes worde/ other to make sure fryn
des in the courte aboute ꝑ kynge to obtey-
ne more promocions ⁊ benefices/or in cu-
riouse buyldinge / sumptuouse and delyca-
te fare / well appareled seruauntes / try-
me decked horses to ryde pompeousely ly-
ke a lorde. Althoughe there were no auc-
torite to proue this/yet the lordely counte-
naunce ⁊ fasshyon of byshops / yea their
common exercyse and also practyse cā well
proue and testyfye this playnely before
the face of all men which knoweth the lor-
delynes of bysshopps . As the Prophete
Esa.iij. Ezay sayethe. The chaungynge of their
countenaunce bewrayeth them / yea they
declare theyr owne synnes them selfes as
sodomytes / and hyed them not. Doo
not

not these thinges playnely agree with
the sayenge of theyr predecessour Paule i.Ti.vi.
the Apostle which sayeth. When we haue
foode and rayment we muste be con-
tented. Is not this lordely honoure
directely agaynste Christes wordes /
which sayethe. The Kynges of nacyons Lu.xxij.
raygne ouer them / and they that haue
auctorite ouer them are called gracy-
ouse lordes. But yow shall not be so.
Also Peter speakethe to his trewe suc-
cessoures sayenge. Feade yow Christes
flocke asmuche as lyeth in yow / takynge
the ouersyght of them not as compelled
therunto / but wyllyngelye / after a god-
ly sorte / not for the desyer of fylthy
lucker / but of a good mynde / not as thou-
ghe yowe were lordes ouer the paryshes /
but that yowe be an example to the flocke /
and that withe good will. But owre lor-
dely Bysshops estate and proude coun-
tenaunce of lyuynge (as it is nowe
vsed) is contrarye to Godes worde / as
it appearethe by these wordes. But
yow shall not be so. And also by these
sayengs. Not as thoughe yow were
lordes ouer the paryshes. And Christ Math.
sayethe. He that is not with me / is a xij.
gaynste me. Wherefore so longe
as they

Than my lorde shulde lacke thē to furnys
she his lordely countenaunce/ and so my
lorde shulde loose his lordely honoure and
prayse of the worlde Wherfore as these
superfluouse possessions be annexed to esta-
tes of Bysshops by mans vayne fantasye
and not by Gods worde / so my lorde
Bysshoppe wyll other keape them to ma-
ke hym more frendes/remembrynge that
ryches maketh many frendes / but
the poore is forsaken of his neyghbowre/
or deuyse the expence of them contrary
to Godes worde/ other to make sure fryn
des in the courte aboute ꝑ kynge to obtey-
ne more promocions ⁊ benefices/or in cu-
riouse buyldinge / sumptuouse and delyca-
te fare / well appareled seruauntes / try-
me decked horses to ryde pompeously ly-
ke a lorde. Although there were no auc-
torite to proue this/yet the lordely counte-
naunce ⁊ fashyon of bysshops / yea their
common exercyse and also practyse cā well
proue and testyfye this playnely before
the face of all men which knoweth the lor-
delynes of bysshopps. As the Prophete
Esa.lij. Ezay sayethe. The chaungynge of their
countenaunce bewrayeth them / yea they
declare theyr owne synnes them selfes as
sodomytes / and hyed them not. Woo

not

not these thinges playnely agree with
the sayenge of theyr predecessour Paule 1.Ti.vi.
the Apostle which sayeth. When we haue
foode and rayment we muste be con-
tented. Is not this lordely honoure
directely agaynste Christes wordes /
which sayethe. The kynges of nacyons Lu.xxij.
raygne ouer them / and they that haue
auctorite ouer them are called graci-
ouse lordes. But yow shall not be so.
Also Peter speakethe to his trewe suc-
cessoures sayenge. Feade yow Christes
flocke asmuche as lyeth in yow / takynge
the ouersyght of them not as compelled
therunto / but wyllyngelye / after a god-
ly sorte / not for the desyer of fylthy
lucker / but of a good mynde / not as thou-
ghe yowe were lordes ouer the paryshes /
but that yowe be an example to the flocke /
and that withe good will. But owre lor-
dely Bysshops estate and proude coun-
tenaunce of lyuynge (as it is nowe
vsed) is contrarye to Godes worde / as
it appearethe by these wordes. But
yow shall not be so. And also by these
sayengs. Not as thoughe yow were
lordes ouer the paryshes. And Christ Math.
sayethe. He that is not with me / is a xij.
gaynste me. Wherefore so longe
as they

as they raigne so lordely in the clergie contrary to Godds worde/so longe be they agaynste God. And so longe as they be agaynste God/they be not sente from God/ and then can they not preache trewly and syncerely his worde. For howe can they preache excepte they be sente sayeth Paul. Christe was sente to preache as it appearethe. Marc.i. Luce.iiij.and Esaye.lxi. And Christe sayeth to all his trewe dysciples. As my father sente me/so I do sende yow. And commaundeth also all his Apostles & trewe successors of the Apostles to preache the gospell to the holle worlde and not lordely to raigne in the clergye. Whom Paul teacheth to be as mynysters/sayeng. Lett a man this wise esteame vs/ euyn as the mynisters of Christe and the stuardes of the secretes of God. To preache the gospell therfore (most gracyouse and prudente lorde)is the trewe vocacyon and offyce of all godly Bysshops/ Parsons/ Vycars and of other shepherdes/ and not to be enbasadowrs to prynces/nor to be iudges to here matters of contencyon/ testamentarye causes/dyuorses/ sclaunders/bawdery/and suche other. Your grace hathe of your layefee sufficient bothe in lerninge and wysedome and of good conscyence to here and

Rom.x.

Joan.ij

1.Cor. .iiij.

iudge

iudge suche causes and varyaunces/re-
myttynge Bysshops to attende their of-
fyce and vocacyon by God (and not
by man) appoynted. And therfore
they shulde not exercyse any other of-
fyce than God hathe appoynted to
them. For no man can serue two ma-
sters. And if Bysshops and other Pa- Mat.vi
stoures wolde dyligently execute theyr
vocacyon and offyce / moche fewer of
these matters of contencyon shalbe in
vre and experience other to be harde or
iudged. Seinge the scriptures commaun
deth so ernestly euery man to walke as
he is called. Many Christen men mer-
uell gretly why the Bysshops desyre and
procure so greadely to exercyse the offy-
ce pertaynynge to an other vocacyon/
and to leue their vocacyon and offyce
(appoynted by God to them to be exer-
cysed) not executed nor performed and
done. Verely bycause they loue the glo- Joā.ix.
rye of men / more then the glorye of
God. And surely euen as Caiphas and
Annas beinge Bysshops and exercysyn-
ge the offyce of seculer and temporall
iudges ded iudge Christ to be crucifyed/
so owr Bysshops so longe as they contra

eye to their callynge doo exercyse the of-
fyce of temporall iudges / so longe shall
they persecute Christe and his membres /
and studye to suppresse his worde / and
not to preache the same. Haue not they
busynes sufficyent wherwith to occuppe
them in their owne offyce? If they wol
de loke well therunto / doo not they see
on euery syde detestable synne raigne
throughout all this your realme. Is
there not suche excesse and costelynes of
apparell / bycause of dyuersyte and chaū-
ge of fashyons that scarce a worshipfull
mans landes which in tymes paste was
wonte to fynde and mayntayne twenty
or thirty tall yomen / a good plenty-
full howsholde for the releyse and com-
forte of many poore and needye / and the
same nowe is not sufficyent and able to
mayntayne the heyre of ꝑ same landes /
his wiffe / her gentle woman or mayde /
two yomen / and one lackey. The pryn
cypall cause herof is their costly apparell /
and specially their manyfolde and dy-
uerse chaunges of fashyons whiche the
man and specially the woman muste wea
re vpon bothe headde and bodye. Som-
tyme cappe / somtyme hoode / nowe the
frenche

frenche faſchyon/nowe the ſpanyſche faſ-
chyon / than the Italyan faſchyon / and
then the myllen faſchyon / ſo that there
is noo ende of conſumynge of ſubſtaunce
and that vaynely and all to pleaſe the
prowde folyſhe man and womens fanta-
ſye. Hereof ſpryngethe great myſerye
and neade. The fathers conſumynge
theyr goodes in vayne/pryde/and wan-
ton luſtes (called vpon by powr grace to
ſerue powr mageſtye for the defence of
this powr realme) haue not to doo their
dewtye / wherby they be compelled to
ſell theyr landes/or els to burdeyne their
frendes / or els to daunger them ſelfe in
dette to many. Hereof ryſethe it that the
father is compelled to declare his will
vpon hys landes to be executed after his
deathe (when he can not occupye the ſa-
me hym ſelfe) for the aduauncement and
helpe of his children and the payment
of his dettes/ whom eaſely he myght in
his lyfe haue aduaunced holpen and diſ-
charged/yf ſuche ryotuouſe expenſes had
ben auoyded. The Prophete Oſee ſa- Oſe.iiij
yethe. There is noo trewethe/ no mer-
cye / no knowleage of God in earthe/
curſynge/ lyenge / murdre/ theſte / adul-

seruye hathe broken in/and yet doo owre shepherdes holde theyr peace. What commessacyon / dronckenes / detestable swearinge by all the partes of Christes bodye (and yet callynge them in scorne huntinge othes) extorcyon / pryde / couetuousenes / and suche other detestable vyce raigne in this powre realme / agaynste the whiche owre Bysshops and other Pastoures shulde contynually crye
Esa. v. owte/ as the Prophete sayethe. Crye nowe as lowed as thow canste / leaue not of / lyfte vp thy voyce lyke a trompett/and shewe my people their offences and the howse of Iacob their synnes. But alas they be become bothe blynde and dome / as the Prophete sa-
Esaye. lxvi. yethe. Hys watchmen are all blynde they haue all together noo vnderstandinge / they are all dome dogges not able to barcke / they are sleppe/folysshe are they and lye snortinge / they are shameles dogges that be neuer satysfyed. The shepherdes also in lyke maner haue no vnderstandinge / but euery man turnethe his owne waye/ euery one after his owne couetuousenes vb all his powre. What is the cause that they doo

not

not execute this their office? Other by-
cause they can not / or bycause they haue
some other worldely busynes that they will
not apply them selfes to performe bo-
the. Or els they be afrayed to spea-
ke the trwethe / lest they shulde dys-
please men. Whom Paul reproueth
sayenge. If I shulde please men I shulde
not be the seruaunte of Christe. Also Gal. i.
the Prophete sayethe. God breakethe Psal. liij
the bones of them whiche studye to
please men / they be confounded / be-
cause the lorde dispyseth them. Not
withstandynge our byshops loue so well
their greate dompnions wherby they
maynteyne their lordely honoure / that
they will not displease men with prea-
chynge the treuth / lest they shulde then
loose their greate possessyons / and con
sequently their lordely glorye. But
surely as longe as they possesse theyr
greate dompnions / so longe they wyll
contynewe and maynteyne their pry-
de. And so longe as they contynewe
in pryde / so longe they shall not receyue
the holy ghoste / whiche shall teach
them to speake the treuthe. For vpon
whom shall my spiete reaste (sayeth the

Esa.vi. Prophete Esaye) but vpon the meake and lowely/ and vpon hym which feareth my sayengs. Also the Prophete sayeth. God resysteth the prowde/ and vnto the meake and lowely he geuethe his grace. Wherfore so longe as the byschops contynewe in this worldely wealthe and honowre/so longe will they neuer do their dewtye and offyce/but rather persecute the worde of God whiche declarethe and shewethe what is their offyce and their dewtye. And so longe as they do not exercyse their offyce and vocatyon / but doo persecute the worde and suche as syncerely preache the same / so longe shall synne increase. For if the eye be wicked / all the body shalbe full of darcknes. For euen as at suche tyme when the Byschoppe of rome was fyrste endowed with greate possessyons/ a voyce was harde/ sepinge. Nowe venome and poyson is caste and shed forthe into the churche of God. In lykewyse no doubt most godly gouernoure/ semblable voyce and sayenge maye be verifyed in and vpon all the churche of Englande / sythen powr Byschops were endowed with so greate possessyons

sessyons and lordely domynions. No doubt gracyous lorde / so longe as grete lordely domynions / worldely honours and wealthe / be anexed and knyt to the vocacyon and offyces of Byshops and other Pastours / these myscheues & inconuenyēces shall euer ensue & folowe. Fyrste the moste prowde and ambycyouse / the moste couetuouse and wycked / which other by money frendshyp or flattery can obtayne the benefyce / wyll laboure with all study and polycye to gett the benefice / only for the worldely honoure and not for the zeale and loue which he shulde haue to enstructe and teache the people commytted to his cure and charge. And for the profett which belongethe and apperteynethe to the same benefyce / they wyll dyssemble humylyte and despeccyon of all worldely profettes and pleasures / so colorablye and subtelly / that yt shall be very harde for youre magestye or any other hauynge aucthoryte to geue benefyces to perceyue them. And when they haue obteyned the benefyce / than euery Christen man shall well perceyue that he hathe not entered in by the dore: that

is for the zeale and loue to doo and exe-
cute the offyce / but hathe clymmed vp
and assended by a nother waye / that ys
for the luker and honoure annexed to
the offyce. And than certenly whoso
euer assendeth and enterethe in by a no-
ther waye / can not be but a thefe / by
daye and by nyght / whose study and
laboure muste be to steale / kyll / and to
destroy. As Christe (whose wordes
muste euer be true) sayethe. The the-
Joan.x. fe commethe not but to steale / to kyll /
and to destroye. So that so longe as so
moche worldely profett and honoure be
longethe to the benefyce: so longe wyll
he that for wante and lacke of lernynge
can not doo the offyce / and also the mo-
ste couetuouse and proude / wyll labou
re to haue the offyce / whereby the peo
ple commytted to his cure / shall not one
ly be vntawgth / and not lerned in Gods
worde / but also all they which can prea
che and teache Godds worde and loue
the same / by suche a worldely wolfe / shall
be extremely persecuted and tormen-
ted. For he can not but steale / kyll / and
destroye / and vtterly abhore / and hate
the godly / as Christe sayethe. Yf you
were

were of the worlde / the worlde wolde loue his owne. But because you be not of the worlde / but I haue chosen you from the worlde / therfore the worlde hathe hate you. No doubt a man shall moche rather vpon thornes gather grapes / and vpon brambles and bryres gather fygges / than of soche greedy theues to haue any Christen relygyon: other set forthe / preached / or stablyshed. Wherfore (moste redoubted Prynce) seuenge that theyr greate possessyons / ryches / worldely offyces / cures / and busynes / be the impedyment and let that they do not execute theyr vocacyon and offyce / whiche is so godly profytable and necessarye for this your common wealthe / yowe beinge owr soueraigne lorde and Kynge (whom God hathe called to gouerne this your realme / and to redresse the enormytyes and abuses of the same) by all iustyce and equyte are bounden to take awaye from Bysshoppes and other spirytuall shepherdes suche superfluyte of possessyons and ryches and other secular cures busynes and worldely offyces / whiche be the cause of moche synne in them / and no lesse occasyon

N. Crymes wher-

whereby they be letted to execute their office / to the greate losse and hynderance of moche fayre vertue and goodnes / which moght be admynistred to your subiectes / through the trew preachynge of Godes worde. And that done / than circumspectly to take heade that none be admytted to be Pastoures / but suche as cã preache and haue preached syncerely Godes worde. And all suche as will not / to remoue them from their cures. This godly ordre obserued in the electyon of spirituall pastoures / and the pestylent poyson moued and taken away from their vocatyon / faithe shall increase / and synne shall decrease / trewe obedience shall be obserued wyth all humylite to your magestye and to the hygher powers by your grace appoynted in office. Cyuile quyetnes reste and peace shalbe stablyshed / God shal be feared honoured and loued / whiche is theffecte of all Christen lyuinge.

(☞)

O Lorde saue our moste souerayngne lorde Kynge Henry the eyght/ and graunte that he may ones throughly fele and perceyue what myserable calamyte sorowe & wretchednes we suffer now in these dayes a brode in the countre/ by these vnlerned / poppyshe / and moste cruell tyrauntes / euen the very enemyes of Chrystes crosse / whose payne shall be withowt ende / whan we shall lyue in Ioye for euer. Graunte yet ones agayne I say goode lorde and moste mercyfull father through thy sone Iheſus Christe/ that whan his grace shall knowe and perceyue (by thy gyfte & goodnes) theyr most detestable wayes in mysusynge thy heretage / that he wyll ernestly go a boute to se a redresse amonge them / and to the penytent and contrycte in harte to shewe his accustomed goodnes / and to the other his iustyce/accordinge to saynt Paules doctryne/and his graces lawes.

And moste dreade souerayngne (with all humylyte and humblenes of harte) I beseche your grace/ (accordinge to your accustomed goodnes) to take this my rude

supply-

supplycacyon to the beste/as a frute of my obedyence / wheryn I haue not dyssembled / but haue opened fully vnto your grace the grounde and very bottome of my hart / nor of any grudge eupll wyll or malyce that I beare to any spirytuall shepherde (God I take to recorde) but onely for the glory of God / the honoure of your grace/and the wealthe and profett of your moste naturall and louinge subiectes.

FINIS.

¶ Enpynted in the yeare of our Lorde. M. CCCCC. xliiij. in the monethe of December.